

## CLAIMS

What is claimed:

- 1        1. A method of determining the geographic locations of Internet users,  
2 comprising:
  - 3            receiving one of an IP address or domain name associated with an Internet user;
  - 4            determining a geographic address of an entity that owns the IP address;
  - 5            obtaining a route through the Internet to a target host for the IP address;
  - 6            deriving a geographic location of any intermediate hosts contained within the route  
7 through the Internet to the target host;
  - 8            analyzing the route and the geographic locations of any intermediate hosts;
  - 9            determining the geographic location of the Internet user; and
  - 10          storing the geographic location of the Internet user in a database along with the  
11 geographic locations of a plurality of other Internet users.

- 1        2. The method as set forth in claim 1, wherein the receiving one of the IP address  
2 or the domain name comprises receiving both the IP address and the domain name and the  
3 method further comprises verifying that the IP address corresponds to the domain name.

- 1        3. The method as set forth in claim 2, wherein the verifying comprises  
2 performing an nslookup on one of the IP address or domain name.

1           4.     The method as set forth in claim 1, wherein the determining comprises  
2     performing a whois for the IP address.

1           5.     The method as set forth in claim 1, further comprising checking whether the  
2     target host is on-line prior to determining the geographic address.

1           6.     The method as set forth in claim 5, wherein the checking comprises  
2     performing a ping.

1           7.     The method as set forth in claim 1, wherein the obtaining of the route through  
2     the Internet comprises performing a traceroute.

1           8.     The method as set forth in claim 1, wherein the analyzing of the route  
2     comprises mapping the route to geographic locations stored in a database.

1           9.     The method as set forth in claim 1, further comprising assigning a confidence  
2     level to the geographic location of the Internet user.

1           10.    The method as set forth in claim 1, wherein the determining of the geographic  
2     location includes analyzing the domain name for the geographic location.

1           11.    The method as set forth in claim 1, further comprising confirming the  
2     geographic location of the Internet user.

1           12. A method of providing geographic locations of Internet users to requestors,  
2 comprising:

3           collecting geographic locations on a plurality of Internet users and storing the  
4 geographic locations in a database;

5           receiving a query from a requestor for the geographic location of a particular Internet  
6 user, the query containing at least one of an IP address or a domain name for the particular  
7 Internet user;

8           determining whether the geographic location of that particular Internet user is  
9 available in the database;

10          if the geographic location is available in the database, delivering the geographic  
11 location on that particular Internet user to the requestor.

1           13. The method as set forth in claim 12, wherein if the geographic location is not  
2 available in the database, the method further comprises determining the geographic location  
3 of the particular Internet user and storing the geographic location in the database.

1           14. The method as set forth in claim 12, wherein the determining whether the  
2 geographic location is available in the database comprises sending a query to a remote  
3 database.

1           15. The method as set forth in claim 12, wherein the determining whether the  
2 geographic location is available in the database comprises sending a query to a local

3 database.

1           16.     The method as set forth in claim 12, further comprising selectively delivering  
2 information to the Internet user based on the geographic location of the Internet user.

1           17.     The method as set forth in claim 12, further comprising selectively redirecting  
2 the Internet user based on the geographic location.

1           18.     A method of tracking the behavior of Internet users based on their activities on  
2 the Internet, comprising:

3           obtaining geographic locations of a plurality of Internet users and storing the  
4 geographic locations in a database;

5           receiving queries from requestors for the geographic locations of a particular Internet  
6 user;

7           delivering the geographic location for that particular Internet user to the requestors;

8           tracking the requestors associated with that particular Internet user; and

9           determining the behavior of the particular Internet user based on the associated  
10 requestors.

1           19.     The method as set forth in claim 18, further comprising determining the  
2 geographic locations of the plurality of Internet users.

1           20.     The method as set forth in claim 18, wherein the determining of the behavior

2 comprises generating a profile for that particular Internet user.

1           21.     A method of determining a geographic location of an Internet user that  
2 accesses the Internet through a caching proxy server, comprising:

3           embedding an identifiable tag in a web page to form a tagged web page;  
4           in response to the Internet user requesting the web page and receiving a request for the  
5 web page from the caching proxy server, transmitting the tagged web page to the Internet  
6 user through the proxy server;

7           opening a direct connection with the Internet user;  
8           communicating with the Internet user through the direct connection;  
9           receiving the identifiable tag from the Internet user;  
10          obtaining an IP address for the Internet user from use of the identifiable tag; and  
11          determining the geographic location of the Internet user.

1           22.     The method as set forth in claim 21, wherein the embedding comprises tagging  
2 the web page with a Java applet.

1           23.     The method as set forth in claim 21, wherein the identifiable tag comprises a  
2 unique applet parameter tag.

1           24.     The method as set forth in claim 21, further comprising marking the web page  
2 as uncachable.

1           25. The method as set forth in claim 21, wherein the opening of the direct  
2 connection comprises accepting the direct connection through a port.

1           26. A method of determining a geographic location of an IP address on the  
2 Internet, comprising:

3           obtaining an access number for an Internet Service Provider;  
4           connecting to the Internet Service Provider through the access number;  
5           determining an IP address provided by the Internet Service Provider;  
6           determining a route through the Internet;  
7           determining a geographic location of at least one point of presence for the Internet  
8 Service Provider by analyzing the route; and  
9           determining the geographic location of the IP address based on the geographic  
10 location of the point of presence for the Internet Service Provider.

1           27. The method as set forth in claim 26, wherein the obtaining of the access  
2 number comprises obtaining a dial-up number for the Internet Service Provider.

1           28. The method as set forth in claim 26, wherein the determining of the route  
2 comprises performing a *traceroute*.

1           29. The method as set forth in claim 26, further comprising storing the geographic  
2 location of the IP address.

1           30.    A method for permitting information to be selectively delivered to Internet  
2 users, comprising:  
3                 compiling information on a plurality of Internet users and obtaining data related to the  
4 Internet users;  
5                 storing the information and data related to the plurality of Internet users in at least one  
6 database;  
7                 receiving a query from a requestor regarding a particular Internet user;  
8                 retrieving the data associated with that particular Internet user; and  
9                 transmitting the data to the requestor;  
10          wherein the data permits the requestor to select desired content for that particular  
11 Internet user from a plurality of possible choices of possible content and to deliver the  
12 desired content to that particular Internet user.

1           31.    The method as set forth in claim 30, wherein the database is a geography  
2 database and the data relates to geographic locations of the Internet users.

1           32.    The method as set forth in claim 30, wherein the database is an authorization  
2 database and the data relates to the desired content the particular Internet user is authorized to  
3 receive.

1           33.    The method as set forth in claim 30, wherein the database is a network speed  
2 database and the data relates to a down-load rate for the particular Internet user.

1           34.     The method as set forth in claim 30, wherein the database is a profile database  
2 and the data relates to a profile of the particular Internet user.

1           35.     The method as set forth in claim 30, wherein the database is an interface  
2 database and the data relates to an interface of the particular Internet user.

1           36.     A method of determining a geographic location of an Internet user that  
2 accesses the Internet through a caching proxy server, comprising:  
3                 associating a Java applet with a web page;  
4                 in response to the Internet user requesting the web page and receiving a request for the  
5 web page from the caching proxy server, transmitting the web page and associated Java  
6 applet to the Internet user through the proxy server;  
7                 opening a direct connection with the Internet user;  
8                 communicating with the Internet user through the direct connection;  
9                 obtaining an IP address for the Internet user; and  
10                 determining the geographic location of the Internet user.